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可変抵抗スイツチ

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明細書

1. 考案の名称

可変抵抗スイッチ

2. 実用新案登録請求の範囲

ケース底部に設けられた一対の電極と、これらの電極上に戦産された平板状感圧導電性ゴムと、この感圧導電性ゴム上面に接触しないようにかって表情され、押圧により曲率中心を通る母校でする弾性導電曲面板とを有し、さらに、前配曲面板に下端が当場あるいは近接し、上端が前配ケースから踏出する押しボタンを備えていることを特徴とする可変抵抗スイッチ。

3. 考案の詳細な説明

(産業上の利用分野)

本考案はスイッチのオン、オン機能の切換動作を指先の押圧感覚で容易に判断することができる可変抵抗スイッチに関し、スイッチの押しボタンの押し具合で2つの端子間の抵抗値を変化させることができる可変抵抗スイッチに関す

る.

(従来の技術)

従来の感圧素子、特に感圧導電性ゴムを使用した可変抵抗スイッチは、スイッチケースの底部に一対の電極が敷設され、その上に載置された感圧導電性ゴムの上面を押しボタンで押圧することによる感圧導電性ゴムの抵抗値の変化を利用するのが一般的である。

ところが、このような可変抵抗スイッチについては、オフ状態で押しボタンを押した時に、オフ状態から可変抵抗機能を働かせるまでの動作中に、いつオン状態となったかの切換節度(クリックアクション)がなく、押しボタンの操作者にとってこのスイッチが使いづらいものとなることが多かった。

(考案の目的)

本考案の目的は前記従来の可変抵抗スイッチ の有する欠点を解消し、押圧操作時にオフ状態 からオン状態に切り換わったことが操作者に明 確に判断できるように、押しボタンのストロー グの途中に切換点 (クリックポイント) を持たせた優れた可変抵抗スイッチを提供することである。

[考案の構成]

前記目的を達成する本考案の可変抵抗スイッチは、ケース底部に設けられた一対の電極と、これらの電極上に載置された平板状態圧導電性ゴムと、この感圧導電性ゴム上面に接触しないようにケースに支持され、押圧により曲率中心を通る母線方向に変化するのである。

(実施例)

以下添付図面を用いて本考案の実施例を説明 する。

第1図および第2図は本考案の可変抵抗スイッチ10の一実施例の構造を示す互いに直交する方向の報斯面図である。

この実施例の可変抵抗スイッチ10は、下部スイッチケース5と、これを覆う上部スイッチケース2の上側に踏出する押しボタン1とを備えている。そして、前記下部スイッチケース5の底部には、一対の電極4A、4Bが所定の間隙を隔てて敷設されており、両電極4A、4Bの端部はそれぞれ端子7A、7Bによって下部スイッチケース5の底部外に突出している。

前記詞電極4A, 4Bの上には、これら両電極4A, 4Bに跨るように均一厚の平板状感圧導電性ゴム6が聴置されており、この感圧導電性ゴム6の上方に弾性導電曲面板3が非接触状態で位置している。前記感圧導電性ゴム6は圧力に応じて抵抗値が変化するものであり、無負荷状態では前記電極4A, 4Bを絶縁状態に保つようになっている。

また、前記弾性導電曲面板 3 は、第 3 図に示すようにその長手方向両端部が上方に湾曲して 凹面が上を向いた形状をしており、その曲率中 心を通る母線8の両端部が前記下部スイッチケース5の側面に形成された段部5 A に報識状態で支持されている。この段部5 A は弾性導電曲面板3の上面より上方にあり、このために、前記弾性導電曲面板3 は感圧導電性ゴム6 に非接触の状態にあるのである。

前記彈性導電曲面板3は、例えばばね性を有する80μ程度のリン青銅で形成されており、 凹面側から矢印ドで示す力で母線8の中心を押 圧した場合、この凹面は弾性変形を起こし、ク リックアクションで前記凹面の何きが変化し、 母線8の方向は第4図に母線9で示すように直 角方向に変化する。

この時、前記弾性導電曲面板3の底面3Aが前記感圧導電性ゴム6に接触するように、この弾性導電曲面板3は前記段部5Aによって感圧導電性ゴム6の上面から離されている。

また、この実施例では弾性導電曲面板 3 は長手方向両端部が上方に湾曲しているが、下方に湾曲していてもこのクリックアクションは得ら



れる。

このような弾性導電曲面板3の上方には、前記押しボタン1の下端が当接あるいは近接した状態で位置している。この押しボタン1は、その胴部1Bが前記上部スイッチケース2に形成されたガイド2A内に上下に関助自在に挿入されており、上端の拡関された関部1Aがガイド2Aの上部に踏出している。1Cはこの押しボタン1の前記ガイド2Aからの抜けを防止する係止段部である。

電流が一方の端子7Aから感圧導電性ゴム6を 介して弾性導電曲面板3を通り、更に感圧導電 性ゴム6を介して他方の端子7Bへと流れるこ とができるようになる。この状態が本考案の可 変抵抗スイッチ10のオン動作開始点である。

さらに押しボタン1を押配すると、悠圧導電性ゴム6が圧縮されてその抵抗値が減るので、 ・ 端子7A-端子7B間の抵抗値は徐々に減少する。そして、前述の押圧動作をやめると、弾性 ・ 電曲面板3の復元力によって押しボタン1が 神し上げられ、弾性導電曲面板3は無負荷時の 状態の位置に戻って感圧導電性ゴム6には換触 しなるので、端子7A-端子7B間の抵抗 値は無限大を示す。

本考案の可変抵抗スイッチ10は以上のように 動作するので、弾性導電曲面板3の形状変化に よるスイッチ切換動作が押圧感覚で容易に押し ボタン1を押す操作者に理解でき、また、押圧 力と抵抗値との変化特性も弾性導電曲面板3の 形状を調整することにより制御することが可能

である。さらにまた、弾性導電曲面板3を用いることにより、感圧導電性ゴム6を流れる電流を流れていい面方向の電流から感圧導気性ゴム6の厚さ方向の電流に変化することができる。そして、電極4A、4Bの端子7A、7Bを下邰スイッチケース5の下方から取り出すことができるので、容易に可変抵抗スイッチ10の組立ができ、そして、コンパクトな業子を提供することが可能である。

(考案の効果)

たことが操作者に明確に判断できるという効果がある。また、クリック機能を有する弾性導電 曲面板を使用したことにより、押圧力に応じた 抵抗値の変化の特性を調整することができると いう利点がある。

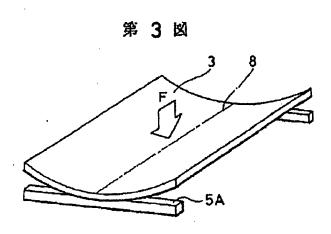
4. 図面の簡単な説明

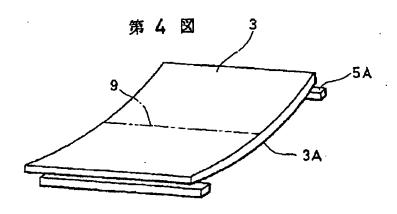
第1図は本考案の可変抵抗スイッチの一実施例の縦断面図、第2図は第1図のⅡ—Ⅱ線にむける縦断面図、第3図は本考案の可変抵抗スイッチに使用する弾性導電曲面板の斜視図、第4図は第3図の弾性導電曲面板の抑圧による変形状態を示す斜視図である。

1 …押しボタン、2 …上部スイッチケース、3 …弾性導電曲面板、4 A、4 B …電極、5 …下部スイッチケース、6 … 怒圧導電性ゴム、7 A、7 B …端子、8、9 …母線、10 …本考案の可変抵抗スイッチ。

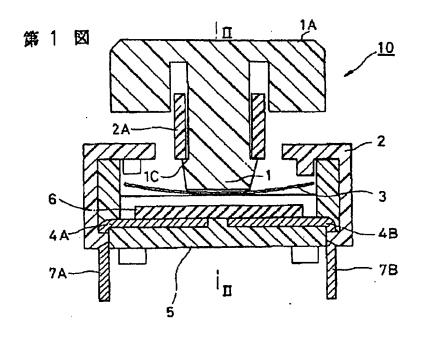
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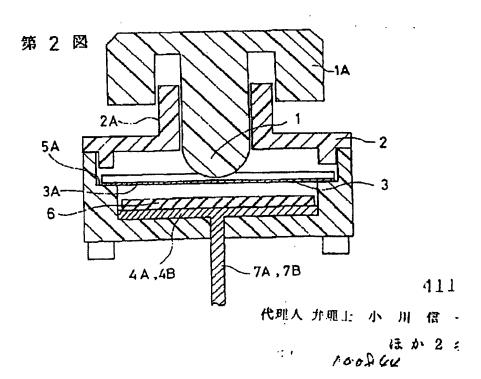
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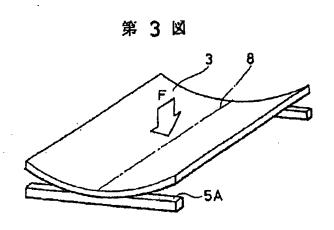


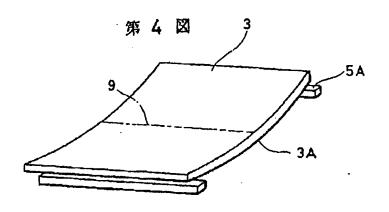


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Specification

Title of the invention
 Variable resistance switch

2. Utility Model Registration Claims

A variable resistance switch comprising a pair of electrodes provided at the bottom of a case, a flat plate of pressure-sensitive electro-conductive rubber provided on said electrodes, and an elastic electro-conductive curved plate supported by said case so that it is not in contact with the top surface of said pressure-sensitive electro-conductive rubber and of which the generation line direction passing through the center of curvature is changed orthogonally in response to pressure, characterized by further comprising a push button having a bottom end abutting or residing near said curved plate and a top end exposed from said case.

3. Detailed explanation of the invention [Scope of the invention]

The present invention relates to a variable resistance switch in which on/off switching can be easily recognized through the feeling of pressure on a fingertip and the resistance between two terminals can be changed depending on how far the push button of the switch is pressed.

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[Prior art technology]

Prior art pressure sensitive elements, particularly variable resistance switches using pressure sensitive electro-conductive rubber comprise a pair of electrodes at the bottom of a switch case and a pressure sensitive electro-conductive rubber on top of it wherein the pressure sensitive electro-conductive rubber is pressured at the top surface through a push button to change the resistance of the pressure sensitive electro-conductive rubber.

In such a variable resistance switch, when the push button is pressed while the switch is off, there is no switchover point (click action) to indicate when it is turned on in the course of operation to activate the variable resistance function from the off-state. Hence, the operator of the push button often experiences difficulty in using such a switch.

[Purpose of the invention]

The purpose of the present invention is to resolve the above problems with the prior art variable resistance switch and to provide an excellent variable resistance switch in which a switchover point (click point) is provided in the middle of the stroke of the push button so that the operator clearly recognizes the switching from the off-state to the on-state in the course of the pressing operation.

[Structure of the invention]

In order to achieve the above purpose, the variable resistance switch of the present invention comprises a pair of electrodes provided at the bottom of a case, a flat plate of pressure sensitive electro-conductive rubber provided on the electrodes, and an elastic electro-conductive curved plate supported by the case so that it is not in contact with the top surface of the pressure sensitive electro-conductive rubber and of which the generation line direction through the center of curvature is orthogonally changed in response to pressure, characterized by further comprising a push button having a bottom end abutting or residing near the curved plate and a top end exposed from the case.

[Embodiments]

An embodiment of the present invention is described hereafter with reference to the drawings.

Figs. 1 and 2 are cross-sectional views in directions orthogonal to each other showing the structure of a variable resistance switch 10 according to an embodiment of the present invention.

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The variable resistance switch 10 of this embodiment comprises a lower switch case 5, an upper switch case 2 covering it, and a push button 1 exposed above the upper switch case 2. A pair of electrodes 4A and 4B is provided at the bottom of the lower switch case 5 at a specific distance. The ends of the electrodes 4A and 4B protrude from the bottom of the lower switch case 5 as terminals 7A and 7B.

On the electrodes 4A and 4B provided is a flat plate of pressure sensitive electro-conductive rubber 6 having a uniform thickness to link the electrodes 4A and 4B together. An elastic electro-conductive curved plate 3 is provided above the pressure sensitive electro-conductive rubber 6 with no contact. The pressure sensitive electro-conductive rubber 6 has variable resistance according to the pressure. The electrodes 4A and 4B are insulated from each other under no load.

With the longitudinal ends being curved upward, the elastic electro-conductive curved plate 3 has a concave surface facing upward as shown in Fig.3.

It is supported by steps 5A formed on the sidewalls of the lower switch case 5 at either end of the generating line 8 passing through the center of curvature resting thereon. The steps 5A are at a higher level than the top surface of the elastic electro-conductive curved plate 3. Therefore, the elastic electro-conductive curved plate 3 is not in contact with the pressure-sensitive electro-conductive rubber 6.

The elastic electro-conductive curved plate 3 is, for example, made of a phosphor bronze of approximately 80 μ having spring-like properties. When pressed at the center of the generating line 8 on the concave surface side with the force indicated by an arrow F, the concave surface is elastically deformed and changes its orientation with a click action. The generating line 8 changes its orientation orthogonally to the generating line 9 shown in Fig.4.

The elastic electro-conductive curved plate 3 is spaced from the pressure-sensitive electro-conductive rubber 6 by the steps 5A so that the bottom surface 3A of the electro-conductive curved plate 3 makes contact with the pressure-sensitive electro-conductive rubber 6 in the above process.

In this embodiment, the elastic electro-conductive curved plate 3 has the longitudinal ends curved upward. However, the longitudinal ends curved downward yield the same click action.

A push button 1 is provided above the elastic electro-conductive curved plate 3 with the bottom end abutting or residing near it. The push button 1 has a body 1B that is vertically slidably inserted in a guide 2A formed in the upper switch case 2 and head 1A having an extended top and exposed above the guide 2A. The number 1C represents an engaging step for preventing the push button 1 from coming out of the guide 2A.

For operating the variable resistance switch 10 of the present invention having the above structure, the push button 1 is pressed down so that its bottom end presses the elastic electro-conductive curved plate 3 downward. With this pressing, the elastic electro-conductive curved plate 3 changes its state from one in which the longitudinal ends are curved upward to the other in which the transverse ends are curved upward via a flat state. This is a click action. When the elastic electro-conductive curved plate 3 undergoes the click action described above, it makes contact with the pressure-sensitive electro-conductive rubber 6 below it.

Then, an electric current flows from one terminal 7A to the elastic electro-conductive curved plate 3 via the pressure-sensitive electro-conductive rubber 6 and further to the other terminal 7B via the pressure-sensitive electro-conductive rubber 6. In this state, the variable resistance switch 10 of the present invention is at the switch-on start point.

With the push button 1 being further pressed, the pressure-sensitive electro-conductive rubber 6 is compressed and has reduced resistance, which gradually reduces the resistance between the terminals 7A and 7B. When pressing is discontinued, the restoration of the elastic electro-conductive curved plate 3 pushes up the push button 1 and the elastic electro-conductive curved plate 3 returns to the no-load state so that it is no longer in contact with the pressure-sensitive electro-conductive rubber 6, with the resistance between the terminals 7A and 7B reaching an infinite value.

The variable resistance switch 10 of the present invention operates as described above. The operator pressing the push button 1 can easily recognize through the feeling of pressure the switching operation as a result of the change in shape of the elastic electro-conductive curved pate 3. Furthermore, the characteristic change in pressure and resistance can be controlled by changing the shape of the elastic electro-conductive curved plate 3.

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Furthermore, the elastic electro-conductive curved plate 3 is used to change the direction of the current flow through the pressure sensitive electro-conductive rubber 6 from the horizontal direction in which an electric current is sluggish to the thickness direction. The terminals 7A and 7B of the electrodes 4A and 4B can be removed from the bottom of the lower case 5. Hence, an easily assembled and compact variable resistance switch can be obtained.

[Effects of the invention]

As described, the variable resistance switch of the present invention comprises a pair of electrodes provided at the bottom of a case, a flat plate of pressure-sensitive electro-conductive rubber provided on the electrodes, and an elastic electro-conductive curved plate supported by the case so that it is not in contact with the top surface of the pressure-sensitive electro-conductive rubber and of which the generation line direction passing through the center of curvature is changed orthogonally in response to pressure, and further comprises a push button having a bottom end abutting or residing near the curved plate and a top end exposed from the case.

The present invention has the efficacy that the operator can clearly recognize switching from the off-state to the on-state in the course of the pressing operation. Furthermore, using an elastic electro-conductive curved plate having a click function, the characteristic change in resistance according to the pressure can be adjusted.

4. Brief explanation of the drawings

Fig. 1 is a vertical cross-sectional view of an embodiment of the variable resistance switch of the present invention. Fig.2 is a vertical cross-sectional view at the line II-II in Fig.1. Fig.3 is a perspective view of the elastic electro-conductive curved plate used in the variable resistance switch of the present invention. Fig.4 is a perspective view of the elastic electro-conductive curved plate of Fig.3 when it is deformed by pressing.

1 ... push button, 2 ... upper switch case, 3 ... elastic electro-conductive curved plate, 4A, 4B ... electrode, 5 ... lower switch case, 6 ... pressure sensitive electro-conductive rubber, 7A, 7B ... terminal, 8, 9 ... generating line, 10 ... variable resistance switch of the present invention.

Representatives Shin-ichi Ogawa, Patent Attorney

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Laid-Open Utility Model S61-100844

Fig.1

Fig.2

Representatives Shin-ichi Ogawa, Patent Attorney and two others
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Fig.3 Fig.4

> Representatives Shin-ichi Ogawa, Patent Attorney and two others 100844

CERTIFICATE OF TRANSLATION

I Roger P. Lewis, whose address is 42 Bird Street North, Martinsburg WV 25405, declare and state the following:

I am well acquainted with the English and Japanese languages and have in the past translated numerous English/Japanese documents of legal and/or technical content.

I hereby certify that the Japanese translation of the attached translation of documents identified as:

Laid Open Utility Model

JP S61-100844 "Variable Resistance Switch"

is to the best of my knowledge and ability true and accurate.

I further declare that all statements contained herein of our own knowledge, are true, that all statements of information and belief are believed to be true.

ROGER P. LEWIS

October 24, 2006